491 upper Rioni) and K'ut'aisi, at a distance of 119 km., seem to be first-class roads, i.e., of the quality of the Georgian Army road. The same holds true for the road connecting Alagir with Ordzhonikidze (40 km.).

The section from Alagir to Zaramag seems to have been widened and improved, but the greatest part of the alpine section still seems to be in the same condition in
•[493] which I found it in 1929. At that time, above Alagir I saw nothing but the heavy horse- or mule-drawn two-wheeled carts of the Caucasian araba type, or the light, horse-drawn four-wheeled passenger vehicles called lineyka ("ruler") in Russian, because of their long, narrow shape. I travelled up to the village ("aul") of Lisri near the Mamyson Pass by lineyka or on foot, and on the way back to Zaramag by a one-horse araba, which I drove myself, followed at a distance by the Oset'ian from whom I had hired it, who was driving a similar conveyance. This alpine part of the road was narrow, so that very often two arabas could not pass each other - particularly disagreeable at turns and sharp curves which could not be seen in their entirety. The road was absolutely unprotected, not having any kind of rails or curbstones; in many places, usually the danger spots, the road was in rather bad

C. G. 233 221 spend the winter in the steppes of the lower Alazani river with their herds of sheep. On the other hand, the Tush living on the Lower Alazani, and also the Bats, move with their families to the mountain pastures in summer, where they live in huts, sunk into the ground and covered with slates. The indigenous means C. G. 493 of transportation is a clumsy two-wheeled cart (uremi) drawn by a pair of oxen or buffaloes. The large wooden disk wheels are firmly joined to the axle-tree. In the mountains, sledges are used to carry in the hay. In a peculiar vehicle called chochiala uremi rolling and sliding are combined: the ends of two long poles attached to the yoke, which slide on the ground, serve the purpose of a pair of front wheels.

C. G. 231 241 The traditional economy of the North-West Caucasian peoples (Abkhaz and Circassians) was based on horse and cattle breeding, agriculture (millet, maize, wheat, rye) some horticulture, beekeeping and (Abkhaz) wine growing. The Abkhaz methods in these activities are the same as the Georgian. Formerly, their economy was largely pastoral, but in the second half of the nineteenth century they became more agricultural. The country is better suited to agriculture, though horse and sheep raising are still important. The Western Circassians, too, were more dependent on cattle-breeding before their forced migration from the mountains to the lowlands of the Kuban. The Kabardians are still mainly sheep-, cattle -, and especially horse-breeders: the Kabardian horses are famous for their

8: Lužbetak E-4 (no date) 1951 RH1 Caucasia RH1

595 the guests have any questions, it is her girl-companion that must answer. The bride may at the most nod in affirmation.

She remains in her "hermitage" for some months before she is finally permitted to live with the rest of the household.[5]

The following description is chiefly that of the main Cherkess tribe, the Kabardians.

The *kalym* has been paid and the day of the wedding agreed upon. The [602] relatives of the bridegroom begin the necessary wedding preparations. The odour of steaming beer and of the finest dainties creates a distinctive atmosphere, peculiar to a Kabardian wedding. On the eve of the marriage a group of men gallop through the *aul* inviting relatives to a preparatory feast, on the occasion of which a collection is taken to cover some of the expenses of the coming wedding, e. g., purchase of a veil for the bride, chartering of a bridal wagon.

On the following day young men fully-armed gather at the house of the groom and noisely gallop off to the bride's house. The bridegroom, however, [603] does not go with them but "hides" at his best-man's house.[6] By doing so he becomes temporarily an adopted son *(kan)* of the latter's sib. A young companion called *shatso-kot* must always be at his side to protect him.

When the riders (or to be more exact, the bridal procession) reach the bride's house, her attendant, whom the riders brought along, is taken to the women's quarters, while the rest, after having feasted and danced till late into the night, are given lodging either in the house of the bride or of one of the neighbours.

Immediately after breakfast on the following day, the unusual hustle peculiar to a Cherkess wedding is observed outside the bride's house. The horses [604] are being harnessed, the bride's belongings are being packed carefully but hurriedly into a trunk and put on the specially decorated bridal wagon. The bride [605] herself is inside the house, being attired in her finest clothes. From her hair hangs a long white ribbon reaching to the ground. She is veiled, or rather, wrapped in a large white shawl. Her wedding dress differs but slightly from the ordinary Cherkess dress, except that it is made of more costly material. She is assisted on to the wagon and takes her place next to her ever-faithful girl-585 attendant. As soon as the bridal procession begins to move, the young men of 526 the *aul*, all on horseback, try to snatch the caps away from the guests and thus begin the usual bridal horseraces. When the more "dignified" part of the procession enters the village of the groom, a wedding song is sung. By this time the racers have rested a bit and are ready to break into another wild chase. They again snatch one another's caps, throwing them on the ground, and as the rider gallops past one of the caps, he tries his skill at shooting a hole through it.

The bride is then taken by two women into the women's quarters, whilst outside the cracks of pistols and guns continue. The bride slowly sits down on a specially prepared bench, covered with a carpet. All eyes are fixed on her as a girl-friend of hers has the honour of removing the shawl.

While the riders outside are enjoying their beer, the youth of the village armed with long poles occupy a place difficult for the horsemen to pass. The

[5] Seidlitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 40 f; Deržavin, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
[6] C. Hahn, *Kaukasische Reisen und Studien*, p. 40.

8: Lužbetak E-4 (no date) 1951 RHI Caucasia RHI

The "Reconciliation" however is not yet over. The following morning an *arba* (Caucasian two-wheeled wagon) drawn by two oxen goes through the village and every family before whose house the *arba* halts is obliged to donate a chicken. In the evening a cartload of chickens arrives, destined for a special "Reconciliation" feast exclusively for women, on which occasion the groom by accepting some beer from his mother is finally "reconciled" also with her.

True, the "Reconciliation" may be over, but the marriage ceremonies are not. Two days later there is more feasting, more drinking, and the so-called *shinak-gagerōs* (i. e., "the twirling of a wooden cup with a long handle") take place. The one toward whom the cuphandle points on stopping after having been twirled must drink its contents. The young people who take part in this drink-feast do not leave the groom's home till there is no more beer left to refill the cup. The old folks have their turn in the celebration in the evening, when the young are obliged to serve the old. One of the main features on the programme is the obligation of all the "old-timers" to take a turn at dancing, ending with a dance of the host and hostess, who, however, have the privilege of exemption from dancing if they drink a cup of beer instead. On this occasion the Kabardian minnesingers called *geguako* are especially welcome. They travel from village to village, playing on their two-stringed instruments, singing and composing beautiful lyrics[20] as the German minnesingers and the French and Italian troubadours once used to do. To each well-wishing of the *geguako* the guests answer with a joyful "Amen!," confirming their "So be it!" with a sip of beer.[21]

The ceremony of thrice walking around the hearth constitutes an important part of the Cherkess wedding just as in Abkhazia.[22]

The official marriage contract is made by representatives of the bride and groom in the presence of the local mullah. Holding both representatives by the hand, he first asks the representative of the bride: "Do you take A as husband for B?" The answer is a simple "Yes!" He then asks the representative of the groom: "Do you take B as wife for A?" "Yes!" This interrogation is repeated a second and a third time. The mullah then recites a prayer and all present, raising their hands heavenward, answer "Amen!"[23]

The expenses entailed in such an elaborate wedding would often bring complete economic ruin to the family, much the same as Caucasian funerals. Ladyženskij implies, however, that such expensive weddings are a thing of the past.[24]

The NORTHEASTERN CAUCASIANS. As our example of a Chechen marriage we have chosen that of the Ingushi, for this group of Chechens has preserved much more of their ancient culture than any other. In so doing, however, we must make allowance for tribal differences.

[20] Hahn, *op. cit.*, pp. 46—49, from whom we have also taken the description of the "Reconciliation." Hahn gives us a few examples of these lyrics, *op. cit.*, pp. 49 ff.

[21] Hahn, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

[22] Dirr, AGKB, p. 25.

[23] Ladyženskij, FT, p. 199.

[24] Ladyženskij, FT, p. 208. See also Dubrovin, *Istorija* for a fairly good description of a Cherkess wedding, I, i, pp. 142 ff, 147 f.

2: Byhan--53 E-4 (no date) 1926 RI3 Abkhaz
Dagestan RH 8
Caucasia RH 1

CD
283
286
294
493
912

Fig. 468. Implements of Caucasian industry: 1, spinning wheel; 2, ribbon loom; 3, knitting board for stockings; 4, wooden sword for flax-scutching; 5, hemp-ripple of wood with iron teeth; 6, wooden spindle; 7, yarn-spool; 8, ax; 9, cloth-cutter; 10, pitchfork; 11, mattock; 12, sickle; 13, pruning-bill for chopping off twigs; 14, brush-cutter; 15, iron spade with forked handle; 16, wagon frame; 17, plow with iron share and yoke; 18, threshing board, underside set with stone splinters; 1 to 3, Lezgin; 8, Zakataly Avar (2, 1/5 nat. size; 3, 1/3 nat. size; 4, 1/18 nat. size; 6, 7, and 12, 1/6 nat. size). (From Count J. Zichy.)

2: Byhan--98 E-4 (no date) 1926 RI3 Abkhaz
Caucasia RHI

[825 cont.]

Iranians (cf. p. 674 f. [untranslated]) and accordingly are called by the Tatar āzade khalkh' or khelaiq (= free people), as are all Lezgin, in contrast to the Tāt, who are called raiyat khelaiq (= subject people). Their name is related to that of the central Asian Tajik (see Vol. II, 1, pp. 412 ff.), and their language is close [Fig. 504 appears here] [826] to modern Persian; it is also spoken by the mountain Jews in Dagestan and on the Terek. In their old cemeteries and near their villages there are isolated ruins of buildings that indicate Christianity in former times. Their relatives, the Talysh in humid, hot Lenkoran on the Caspian Sea, surrounded by Azerbaijani and Tatars, speak another variety of modern Persian that is supposed to contain much Old Persian.

As late as the first half of the nineteenth century, a remnant of the Old Persians, adherents of the teachings of Zoroaster or Zerdusht, the Geber, lived on the plain of Surakhane or Ateshga (= fire-land) near Baku, where a temple stood, in which they worshiped the eternal fire fed by a natural gas source. They had moved here from Persia after they had been driven from there and their main temple on the mountain near Yesd destroyed; they gradually

Fig. 504. Two-wheeled carriage, Baku region.